

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A contents retrieval system comprising:  
retrieval request receiving means for receiving a  
5 retrieval request of contents on a communication network  
from a user accessing through the communication network,  
and setting up processing conditions for retrieval  
processing in accordance with the retrieval request, and  
further issuing a reservation number of the retrieval  
10 processing and informing the user of the reservation number,  
and in addition applying the reservation number to the  
processing conditions and registering the same with a  
predetermined retrieval management table;
- 15 contents retrieval means for retrieving the  
contents on the communication network in accordance with  
the processing conditions registered with said retrieval  
management table and storing the retrieval result, together  
with the reservation number, in a predetermined retrieval  
result storage file; and
- 20 retrieval result providing means for retrieving a  
retrieval result associated with the reservation number  
from among the retrieval results stored in said retrieval  
result storage file, when an inquiry concerning the  
retrieval result is made from a user based on the  
25 reservation number, and providing the retrieval result for  
the user.

2. A contents retrieval system according to claim  
1, wherein said retrieval request receiving means sets up  
as to whether there is a need to display a retrieval result  
as one of the processing conditions in form of a thumb-nail  
5 image, so that the set up result is registered with said  
retrieval management table, and

10                   said contents retrieval means creates the thumb-  
nail image and stores the thumb-nail image in a  
predetermined image storage file in the event that the  
thumb-nail image is needed in accordance with the set up  
result as to whether there is a need to display the thumb-  
nail image registered with said retrieval management table.

15                   3. A contents retrieval system according to claim  
1, wherein said retrieval request receiving means sets up  
as to whether there is a need to inform a user by an  
electronic mail of the fact that a retrieval result is  
obtained at the time point when the retrieval result as one  
of the processing conditions is obtained by said contents  
20 retrieval means, so that the set up result is registered  
with said retrieval management table, and

25                   said contents retrieval means 12 informs the user  
by an electronic mail of the fact that the retrieval result  
is obtained in the event that the thumb-nail image is  
needed in accordance with the set up result as to whether  
there is a need to inform the user by the electronic mail  
registered with said retrieval management table.

4. A contents retrieval program storage medium  
storing a contents retrieval program for forming a contents  
retrieval system on a computer system, said contents  
retrieval system comprising:

retrieval request receiving means for receiving a  
retrieval request of contents on a communication network  
from a user accessing through the communication network,  
and setting up processing conditions for retrieval  
10 processing in accordance with the retrieval request, and  
further issuing a reservation number of the retrieval  
processing and informing the user of the reservation number,  
and in addition applying the reservation number to the  
processing conditions and registering the same with a  
15 predetermined retrieval management table;

contents retrieval means for retrieving the  
contents on the communication network in accordance with  
the processing conditions registered with said retrieval  
management table and storing the retrieval result, together  
20 with the reservation number, in a predetermined retrieval  
result storage file; and

retrieval result providing means for retrieving a  
retrieval result associated with the reservation number  
from among the retrieval results stored in said retrieval  
25 result storage file, when an inquiry concerning the  
retrieval result is made from a user based on the  
reservation number, and providing the retrieval result for

the user.